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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NW Natural Announces 2011-2013 Programs of Focus
Groups align with sustainability; kids, families at risk

PORTLAND, Ore. — NW Natural today announced its three Philanthropic Programs of Focus for 2011-2013. [The Freshwater Trust](#) was selected as the company's signature program, with [Big Brothers Big Sisters Columbia Northwest](#) and [Camp Fire USA Portland Metro Council](#) as NW Natural's Programs of Focus.

"Though we heard from several qualified nonprofit organizations, The Freshwater Trust rose to the top as a group committed to the long-term betterment of our areas' waterways," said Von Summers, community relations, NW Natural. "Big Brothers Big Sisters and Camp Fire stood out as two outstanding organizations that underscore our continued focus on children and families at risk. We are excited to begin our partnerships with these three groups."

The Signature Program

As [NW Natural's Signature Program](#), The Freshwater Trust will receive an annual grant of \$75,000 for three years. The commitment will take the form of grants and in-kind support. These private funds will allow The Freshwater Trust to leverage government investment in conservation to get more on-the-ground work done and educate more students about freshwater health

"The Freshwater Trust is excited to make history with NW Natural as the first conservation organization to be selected as the company's signature philanthropic program," said Joe S. Whitworth, president of The Freshwater Trust. "This strategic investment allows us to continue to develop the innovative tools needed to make bigger and better things happen with our conservation and environmental literacy efforts."

The Freshwater Trust has a direct impact on NW Natural's service territory, including specific restoration projects in the Portland metro, Willamette Valley, Oregon's North Coast and Coos County areas. In addition, 4,700 students will be engaged in hands-on science learning in the Portland metro, Willamette Valley and Columbia Gorge.

Programs of Focus

[Camp Fire USA Portland Metro Council](#) is one of two organizations named a NW Natural Program of Focus that will receive \$35,000 for three years. The funds will be earmarked for Camp Fire's Xploreogon program, a teen mentoring program aimed at increasing graduation rates and college readiness through mentoring, service learning and real world experience.

Camp Fire builds caring, confident youth and future leaders in NW Natural's Portland Metro territory, serving eight counties in Washington and Oregon, including Multnomah, Washington, Clackamas and Clark.

"We're thrilled to partner with NW Natural in this capacity. They've been a core supporter of ours for many years and were instrumental in launching the Xploreogon program in 2008," said Keith Thomajan, President & CEO of Camp Fire USA Portland Metro Council. "As we expand the successful summer program into a year-round partnership with three alternative high schools, NW Natural's generosity will be truly catalytic."

[Big Brothers Big Sisters Columbia Northwest](#) is the second program of focus for NW Natural, also receiving \$35,000 over three years. The dollars will take the form of grants and in-kind support, and will go toward increasing the agencies capacity to serve even more at-risk youth in our community. The agency's goal is to serve 6,000 children annually by 2013, doubling the number currently served.

“Through NW Natural’s generous support we will be able to provide even more children with a caring adult mentor, who in turn will provide each child with the support needed to achieve educational and economic success, creating a healthier future for everyone,” said Lynn Thompson, CEO for Big Brothers Big Sisters Columbia Northwest.

About The Freshwater Trust

The Freshwater Trust is a statewide not-for-profit organization headquartered in Portland, Oregon with satellite offices in Bend and Corvallis. The Freshwater Trust takes an integrated, innovative approach to restoring freshwater ecosystems - from restoring a river's architecture to working with landowners to keep more water in streams to educating children on the importance of freshwater conservation. For more information on The Freshwater Trust, please visit: thefreshwatertrust.org.

About Big Brothers Big Sisters Columbia Northwest

Big Brothers Big Sisters Columbia Northwest is a volunteer and donor-supported organization that helps children reach their potential through one-to-one, life-changing friendships that have a measurable impact. The agency serves Multnomah, Washington, Clark, Clackamas, Skamania, Cowlitz, and Wahkiakum counties. In 2009, Big Brothers Big Sisters Columbia Northwest supported 3,051 children – and the volunteer mentors who serve them – making it the largest Big Brothers Big Sisters agency on the West Coast and eighth largest nationwide. For more information on Big Brothers Big Sisters, please visit: bbbsnorthwest.org.

Camp Fire USA, Portland Metro Council

Camp Fire USA is proud to provide a diverse array of programs year-round that enhance educational enrichment, promote civic engagement, and provide opportunities for youth to study and interact with the natural environment. Using research-based curriculum and outcomes-based programming, Camp Fire gives young people the tools and skills they need to be successful at school, at home, and in our community. The Portland Metro Council of Camp Fire has served well over 100,000 youth since opening in 1912, making it one of the most successful and deeply rooted youth-development organizations in our community. For more information on Camp Fire USA, Portland Metro Council, please visit: portlandcampfire.org.

About NW Natural

NW Natural is headquartered in Portland, Ore., and serves more than 670,000 residential and business customers in Oregon and Southwest Washington. It is the largest independent natural gas utility in the Pacific Northwest. For more information about NW Natural, please visit nwnatural.com.

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